

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 ACDA-12 SSM-03 HA-05 /098 W
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R 041123Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 886
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, IS, JO
SUBJ: CARTER'S REMARKS ON THE WEST BANK

REF: STATE 110082

1. SUMMARY: INCORRECT REPORTS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS
ON THE WEST BANK TO TRUDE FELDMAN HAVE ENGENDERED PUZZLEMENT
AND DISAPPOINTMENT AMONG MODERATES ON THE WEST BANK. WHILE
OUR ATTEMPTS TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT MAY HAVE BEEN HELPFUL,
PRESIDENT SADAT'S REASSURANCE MAY 2 WAS MOST WELCOME.
END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE THE GROWING NUMBER OF SADAT'S WEST BANK CRITICS HAD
ALREADY DISCOUNTED AMERICA'S INTENTION AND/OR ABILITY TO
EFFECT A WEST BANK SOLUTION MINIMALLY ACCEPTABLE TO
PALESTINIANS, MODERATE PALESTINIANS WERE PUZZLED AND
DISAPPOINTED BY REPORTS OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT INTERVIEW
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WITH TRUDE FELDMAN.

3. MAYOR ELIAS FREIJ OF BETHLEHEM TOLD CONGEN OFFICER HE
TOOK REPORTS SERIOUSLY BECAUSE OBVIOUSLY THE EGYPTIANS DID.
PARTICULARLY OBJECTIONABLE TO FREIJ IS A SETTLEMENT DERIVING
FROM THE BEGIN PLAN WHICH, WEST BANKERS ALMOST UNIVERSALLY
AGREE, WOULD BE WORSE THAN THE OCCUPATION.

4. ANOTHER STALWART MODERATE, YUSIF RIDDA--UNRWA OFFICER IN NABLUS--TOLD POLOFF HE WAS MORE PUZZLED THAN ANGRY. "WHAT IS YOUR PRESIDENT UP TO?" HE ASKED.

5. FORMER RAMALLAH JUDGE TAYSIR KANA'AN, NEVER VERY TRUSTING OF US POLICY OR INTENTION HAS TOLD US THAT PRESIDENT'S INTERVIEW MERELY CONFIRMED HIS WORST FEARS. DESPITE HOPES RAISED BY CLINTON, MASSACHUSETTES SPEECH CALLING FOR A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND, IT IS EVIDENT NOW THAT BEGIN PLAN IS WHAT CARTER REALLY HAD IN MIND. HE ALSO SAW PRESIDENT'S WORDS AS RETREATING FROM PREVIOUS FORMULATION OF "RETURN TO '67 BORDERS WITH MINOR MODIFICATIONS" TO SOMETHING WHICH LEAVES ISRAEL IN CONTROL OF MOST OF WEST BANK.

6. POST HAS RELIED UPON OFFICIAL GUIDANCE (REFTEL) IN RESPONDING TO QUERIES. WE HAVE MADE THE POINT THAT PALESTINIANS MUST DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND REMARKS RENDERED SECOND OR THIRD-HAND. FOR A GOOD EXPLANATION OF US POLICY TOWARDS THE PEACE PROCESS, WE REFERRED OUR CONTACTS TO ATHERTON'S APRIL 5 ATLANTA SPEECH--ARABIC AND ENGLISH COPIES OF WHICH WE HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN THEM.

6. WHILE OUR ASSURANCES MAY HAVE BEEN OF MARGINAL HELP, SADAT'S STRONG ENDORSEMENT OF PRESIDENT CARTER MAY 2 HAS BEEN MOST USEFUL SINCE WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO POINT OUT THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE EGYPTIANS, WHO INITIALLY RAISED THE QUESTION, HAVE BEEN SATISFIED.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Remarks:
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